Slow modernisation of special forces

41. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether it is a fact that the army's much awaited project to modernize its special forces is yet to gather steam;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that the huge budget earmarked for their purpose has remained largely unspent; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Central Government to utilize this budget effectively?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The modernization of the Armed Forces including Special Forces is a continuous process. In the 10th Army Plan, a sum of Rupees four hundred crore has been earmarked for the modernization of Special Forces. The amount for which the contracts/schemes have been finalized is Rs. 179.09 crore.

Action against Naval Officers

42. SHRI DATTAMEGHE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Navy has recommended disciplinary action against three of its officers who were found culpable of leaking out classified information to commercial interests;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action so far taken against these officers of the Navy?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) A Board of Inquiry (BOI) was constituted to enquire into the matter of leakage of classified informatiion from Naval war room. In the inquiry report, it was established that there had been leakage of information, primarily of commercial value to unauthorised persons. The three officers, who were severely indicted by the BOI for the leakage of this information, have since been dismissed from service.